

*And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory,
glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.*

John 1:14



We Saw His Glory!

The Gospel of John – Chapters 12-21

*An Eyewitness Presents More Evidence
That Jesus Is the Son of God*

By Richard Cravy

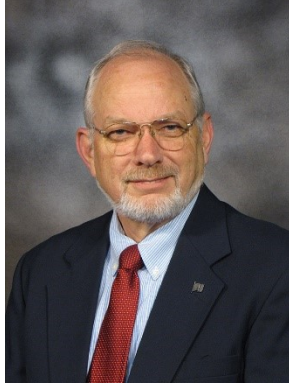
We Saw His Glory!

A Study of John Chapters 12-21

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That Jesus Is the Son of God*

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The “**We Saw His Glory!**” lesson series was taught at the Sunset congregation in October through December of 2022. MP3 audio recordings are also available.

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We Saw His Glory!

1. Introduction to John, Chapters 12-21

I. GETTING RE-ACQUAINTED WITH JOHN'S GOSPEL:

A. AUTHOR: John the Apostle

1. Evidence within the book points to John as the author.
2. External evidence from early manuscripts of this Gospel plus references in several of the earliest Christian writers ("Apostolic Fathers") identify John.

B. **DATE:** Between AD 60 and AD 95. Nothing within the book directly dates it. However, the author's references to himself as an eyewitness (John 1:14; 19:35; 21:24) would limit how long after the events the book could have been written. Also, the discovery in Egypt of a manuscript fragment of the Gospel called the Rylands Papyrus has been dated to about AD 125; this almost certainly indicates the original had to have been written in the First Century.

C. **AUDIENCE:** History indicates John spent the later part of his life in and around Ephesus. His Gospel was probably written for the same readers as the Epistles of John and Revelation he authored – believers around Ephesus.

D. PURPOSE:

1. John 20:30-31 – *"Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."*
2. As an apostle and evangelist for over 50 years after Jesus ascended, John had presented his eyewitness testimony to others innumerable times. Now, as the last apostle and an official eyewitness (Acts 1:8), he provides carefully chosen, compelling evidence which is mostly in addition to what was already circulating in the other Gospels. His purpose was to lead unbelievers to faith and to strengthen those already in the faith.

E. UNIQUENESS:

1. Matthew, Mark, and Luke are often referred to as the "Synoptic Gospels" because of their similar arrangement and content in telling the story of Jesus.
2. They all share similar material: about 90% of Mark is also in Matthew; about 53% is also found in Luke. But each of the the Synoptics do also include content unique to them.

3. In contrast, John's Gospel only uses about 10% of the material found in the Synoptics! There are good indicators John knew what was in the other written accounts so purposely chose to provide complementary and additional materials.
4. Also, the approach John takes is different than the Synoptics:
 - a. Matthew, Mark, and Luke each write primarily about **what** Jesus said and did, plus **what** events occurred around His life.
 - b. On the other hand, John focuses on **who** Jesus was based on the evidence of what Jesus said and did!
5. Another unique feature of John is his vocabulary. As a general rule, if any author repeatedly uses certain words, he is emphasizing something. Here is the frequency of a few of John's key words (a fuller list is in the *Come & See!* study guide):
 - a. Believe – 98
 - b. See/look/behold – 134
 - c. Know – 141
 - d. True/truth – 48
 - e. Witness/testify – 47
 - f. Glory/glorify – 40
6. Finally, only John has a Prologue (1:1-18) which in modern books is similar to an introduction or preface. In the Prologue an author will present beforehand the overarching purpose or conclusion of his writing. What is found in John's Prologue is his majestic and almost poetic description of who Jesus is! Then, starting in 1:19 through the rest of the Gospel he will present the evidence to support his prologue.

F. ARRANGEMENT:

1. A Prologue – 1:1-18
2. A “body of evidence” (1:19-20:31):
 - a. Public Ministry – (1:19-12:50)
 - b. Private Ministry – (13:1-16:33)
 - c. Passion – (17:1-19:42)
 - d. Resurrection – (20:1-29)
3. Conclusion – (20:30-31)
4. An Appendix or Epilogue – (21:1-25)

II. INTRODUCING JOHN, CHAPTERS 12-21:

- A. John 1-12 constitutes Jesus' public ministry from shortly after His baptism until His entry into Jerusalem at Passover time over three years later.
 1. Seven of His miracles (signs) take place in this section.
 2. His public teaching of the crowds and private times with others is recorded here.
- B. John 12-21 contains:

1. Chapter 12:1-50 – Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem for His final week, and will include a banquet, a parade, a meeting with Greek god-fearers, and a Voice from heaven. He will also announce that, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified” (14:23)
2. Chapters 13:1 - 16:33 – Jesus celebrates Passover with the apostles. This is Jesus’ time alone with His disciples, explaining what is to come for Him and for them.
3. Chapters 17:1 - 19:42 – Often called the Passion, Jesus will pray with and for His disciples, travel with them to a garden on the Mount of Olives, be betrayed by Judas, arrested, condemned by the Sanhedrin, examined and found innocent by Pilate, sentenced to death in a prisoner swap, and publicly crucified. After His death, two prominent Jewish leaders who did believe in Him buried His body in a new tomb near the place of His crucifixion.
4. Chapter 20:1-31 – On Sunday after His burial, His disciples discover His tomb open and empty. Then Jesus begins to appear at different times and places to various disciples. The conclusion of John’s story occurs a week after the resurrection when Jesus appears to Thomas along with the other apostles. Thomas confesses to Jesus, “*My Lord and my God!*” (20:28) At this point John gives his purpose statement for the entire book: “*Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of His disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name.*” (20:30-31)
5. Chapter 21:1-25 – This chapter is an Epilogue or Appendix apparently added later by the original author. It provides one additional resurrection appearance, a post-resurrection miracle of Jesus, and the story of Jesus restoring Peter (18:15-18, 25-27).

III. “WE SAW HIS GLORY!”

- A. John’s Gospel contains three of the most profound verses in all of Scripture:
 1. John 1:1
 2. John 1:14
 3. John 3:16
- B. Of these John 1:14 provides the perfect picture of what the Gospel of John is about. John 1:1-13 introduces the Word as God coming into the world, but it is not until verse 14 John dramatically states that “***The Word became flesh and dwelt among us!***”
 1. In the Old Testament God’s presence appeared in various ephemeral forms:
 - a. Angel – Genesis 18:1-15; Numbers 22:21-31.
 - b. Burning bush – Exodus 3:2-10.
 - c. Commander of the Lord’s Host – Joshua 5:13-1.5
 - d. The fourth man in the fire – Daniel 3:16-28.
 - e. A cloud and/or pillar of fire – Exodus 13:21-22.

2. When Moses built the Tabernacle, God's presence (Glory) came down to it – Exodus 25:8; 40:34-38.
 3. Some 400+ years later when Solomon built the Temple in Jerusalem, the Glory (presence) of God also came into it – 2 Chronicles 7:1-3.
 4. **“Dwelt”** is the Greek word *skenoo*, meaning “to pitch tent, encamp; to tabernacle, dwell in a tent; to dwell, have one's abode.” (*Mounce Concise Greek-English Dictionary of the New Testament*). This word is used only here plus five times in the Book of Revelation, always talking about where God's presence is!
- C. **“And we saw (beheld) his Glory”**
1. The Greek language had several different words for “to see.” This word is *theaomai*, which means not just to see with the eyes, but to be a spectator, to observe or contemplate. In fact its noun form is *theatron* from which our English word “theater” comes!
 2. So John says, **“We...”** – probably he is including himself with the other disciples mentioned in the book, or possibly those with him as he writes. Either way they were “witnesses” of Jesus. But not merely a man!
 3. **“His Glory”** – Greek *doxa*, in its most basic meaning is “appearance.” But the emphasis is always upon the nature or greatness of that appearance. So it is best defined as “radiance, brightness, splendor, magnificence, majesty, dignity, preminence, greatness, what is worthy of worship!”
 - a. YHWH God in the Old Testament had great glory, was due all glory and worship, and did not allow His glory to be given to another – Isaiah 42:8; 48:11; Psalm 29:1-2; 72:19.
 - b. John tells us that they beheld this glory of God in the incarnate Word of God. Therefore, the Gospel of John will allow us to behold His glory also!
 - c. John uses “glory” and “glorify” 43 times in his Gospel, almost all of them in reference to Christ.
- D. **“The Only Begotten of the Father”** – The Greek *monogenes* is a compound word from *mono* (only or single) and *genes* (genus or kind), so properly means “only one of that kind.”
1. In Hebrews 11:17, Isaac is called the only begotten son of Abraham. We know Abraham had Ishmael before Isaac as well as other sons later by another wife (Genesis 25:1-4). Yet Isaac was his “only begotten” because he was the only one of his kind – only he was the fulfillment of the promise God had made to Abraham and Sarah to give them a son.
 2. John uses this word four times in his Gospel to refer to Jesus – John 1:14, 18; 3:16, 18 – and once more in 1 John 4:9.
 3. Jesus was the only one of His kind because He was truly God but joined permanently

to human flesh. This is also declared in several other New Testament passages –
Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:19, 22; 2:9

E. **“Full of grace and truth”** – 1:14, 16, 17.

1. **“Grace”** is an unearned or undeserved gift, favor or blessing. The English word appears only about 10 times in the Old Testament. Instead we often hear the words “compassion” or “mercy” when speaking of God, but which carry a similar meaning.
2. John is marvelling that God would send His Son to be with us. It is truly an undeserved gift! But more than that, the Son was “full of grace” in His time on earth, and this will be seen in John’s book.
3. **“Truth”** – John uses this word 25 times, and “true” 23 times. The emphasis is on what can be known beyond doubt and which comes from God Himself.
4. Jesus emphasizes Himself as the bearer of truth even further when He will say, “Truly, truly” (actually “Amen, amen”) 25 times in his speaking in John’s Gospel. Jesus each time is affirming that what He says is true beyond any doubt!

F. **“...Grace and truth came through Jesus Christ!”** – 1:17 – further revealing the mystery or secret!

NOTE TO READERS & STUDENTS:

- This study, entitled **“We Saw His Glory!”**, covers John chapters 12 - 21.
- A previous study – **“Come & See!”** – is available on John chapters 1 - 11.

We Saw His Glory!

2. The Glorious King – John 12:1-50

I. INTRODUCTION:

- A. John 12 is bringing to an end Jesus' public ministry. Chapter 13 will begin His time with His own disciples, then His Passion, resurrection, and appearances.
- B. His public ministry (John 1-12) has included Galilee, Samaria, the eastern shore of the Jordan River and Sea of Galilee, and Jerusalem. His ministry covered more than 3 years, since at least three annual Passovers transpired (2:13, 23; 6:4; 12:1).
- C. John says in his Prologue that the Word "*came to that which was His own, but His own did not receive Him*" (1:11). Through eleven chapters of His story, John has recorded seven major miracles (signs) of Jesus and much of His teaching and claims about Himself. We have witnesses like the Baptist, Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, the blind man, and Lazarus, Martha and Mary who testify about who Jesus is. Yet almost all the Jewish religious leaders are still unbelieving, and have become so hostile they are seeking Jesus' death (5:18; 8:59; 10:31; 11:53).
- D. As chapter 12 begins, Jesus is coming to the Passover Feast in Jerusalem. He knows He is walking purposefully into valley of the shadow of death! But He is fully committed to what his Father has sent Him to do.
- E. Jesus will deal with four different groups of people in this chapter:
 - 1. His friends in Bethany – 12:1-11.
 - 2. The Passover pilgrims filling Jerusalem – 12:12-19.
 - 3. God-fearing Greeks who have come to the Feast – 12:20-36.
 - 4. The unbelieving Jews – 12:37-50.
- F. We will get to see the calm and resolve of Jesus as He moves through this whirlwind of various people, many with shallow faith, no faith, antagonism, and false views of the coming Christ.

II. JESUS IN BETHANY WITH FRIENDS:

- A. John 12:1-11 plus Matthew 26:6-13; Mark 14:3-9.
- B. Six days before Passover Jesus is attending a dinner in His honor. It is at the house of Simon the (former?) leper, and Lazarus, Martha and Mary are also present.
- C. Mary comes with an alabaster jar with about 12 ounces of nard (or spikenard), a very expensive essential oil or perfume imported from the Himalyan mountains of northeastern

India and Nepal (about 2,900 miles away).

1. Mary anoints Jesus' head (Mark 14:3) and feet (John 12:3) and then wipes His feet with her hair.
 2. This surprising act of devotion and love probably sprang from (1) the deep friendship of her family with Jesus (John 11:1-3; Luke 10:38-42); (2) gratitude for Jesus bringing Lazarus back to life; and (3) her understanding that Jesus is going to die very soon (John 12:7; Mark 14:8).
 3. This act is criticized by some of the disciples, led by Judas Iscariot, as wasteful. But John reveals that as the treasurer for Jesus' band of disciples, Judas had been stealing from their resources.
 4. Here is what Warren Wiersbe says about Mary in his commentary:
 - a. "Her act of love and worship was public, spontaneous, sacrificial, lavish, personal, and unembarrassed."
 - b. "When she came to the feet of Jesus, Mary took the place of a slave. When she undid her hair (something Jewish women did not do in public), she humbled herself and laid her glory at His feet."
- D. When the Jews (the residents of Jerusalem and Judea) hear that Jesus and Lazarus are in Bethany, that come out to see them both. As a result the chief priests make plans to kill Lazarus in addition to Jesus (11:57)!

III. THE "TRIUMPHAL ENTRY" WITH THE PASSOVER PILGRIMS:

- A. John 12:12-19; also recorded in the other Gospels. It is said that Jerusalem's population of 50-80,000 would increase three to 5 times normal during Passover from all the pilgrims coming in for the Passover. This would mean space everywhere was at a premium and tens of thousands would be camping on the hillsides, roadsides and on the Mount of Olives during this annual celebration.
- B. News of Jesus' presence, and especially the living witness of Lazarus, creates great excitement and anticipation among this great crowd. Bethany was about two miles southeast of Jerusalem. However, the southern slope of the Mount of Olives blocked sight of the city from Bethany. The road ascended until it reached Bethphage then began to descend with Jerusalem in view (Luke 19:37). The crowds encamped along the road, in the fields and on the hillsides gather to welcome Jesus as He comes riding on a young donkey.
- C. Zechariah 9:9 was a prophecy of the coming Messianic King. Jesus was purposely fulfilling that prophecy, and the people are rejoicing at the sight.
- D. John records several things here which we should notice:
 1. "*Hosanna!*" – "Save us" – from Psalm 118:25
 2. "*Blessed is He who comes in the name of the Lord, indeed, the King of Israel!*" – in Psalm 118:26. Psalms 113-118 are called the Hallel (Praise) and were sung at every

Passover by pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem. What the people had sung in hopeful anticipation for centuries was now being played out before their eyes as they sing!

3. Branches of palm trees – used at their various feasts, especially Tabernacles (Leviticus 23:40), representing righteousness (Psalm 92:12) and God’s provision. Did you know the walls of the Holy and Most Holy Places in the Temple were decorated with images of palms – 1 Kings 6:29-33? In 164 BC when the Maccabees defeated the enemies of Judah, they were greeted as they marched into Jerusalem by the people waving palm branches for victory and peace! Even in Heaven they are found! – Revelation 7:9-10.
- E. What are Jesus’ feelings as He rides to Jerusalem celebrated by the crowds? – Psalm 118:5-24 (all of Psalm 118 would be fulfilled, not just 118:25-26); Luke 19:37-44.
- F. The disciples did not understand the prophetic fulfillment of all this until after His resurrection – John 12:16; Luke 24:27, 44-45.

IV. SOME GOD-FEARING GREEKS COME:

- A. John 12:20-23. Not recorded in the other Gospels.
- B. History records that many Greeks were attracted to the Jewish religion because of its monotheism, high moral teachings, long and unusual history, and prophetic writings. These people were likely in that number. We see others like them later in Acts in the synagogues: Acts 13:16, 26, 43; 14:1; 17:4.
- C. Why did these Greeks come to see Jesus? The text does not say, but the widely known fact Jesus had raised Lazarus and done many other miracles (12:17-18; 11:47), combined with the crowds declaring Him the King who had been prophesied, certainly would have piqued their interest!
- D. The response of Jesus:
 1. We do not know if He met with them, though I think He did.
 2. *“The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified”* – “hour” meant a certain time in a broad sense. It’s used many times in John to refer to His time to suffer and then be glorified – 2:4; 4:21, 23; 5:25, 28; 7:30; 8:20; 13:1; 17:1.
 3. *“Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour’? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name.”* Only by His dying (like a seed - 12:24) can the fruit be produced! Jesus can only save others by not saving Himself – by dying!
- E. The arrival of the Greeks is an illustration that He came to save those of every nation, not just the Jewish people!
 1. He had to be lifted up to draw all men to Him – 3:14; 8:28; 12:32. This “lifted up” has a dual meaning: (1) to be lifted up on a cross (Deuteronomy 21:22-23; John 12:32-33); and (2) to be exalted or raised up to the highest place (Isaiah 52:13-15; Philippians 2:6-11! Both would happen to Jesus!
 2. Jesus came to save people of all nations – John 1:29; 3:16-17; 4:42; 6:33; 8:12; 10:16;

12:32.

- F. The voice from Heaven spoke to Him – 12:28-29. This is the third time God has spoken from Heaven to confirm Jesus’ mission: see at His baptism (Matthew 3:16-17) and His transfiguration (Mark 9:7). As a reminder God spoke several times to Moses in the Old Testament: at the burning bush, Sinai, at Tabernacle, etc.
- G. Jesus’ death will signify God’s judgment/condemnation of this world, but also His casting out of the “prince of this world” from where he has ruled since Eden.

V. THE UNBELIEVING JEWS:

- A. John 12:37-50. In v. 37 John summarizes how the Jewish people and rulers had responded to Jesus’ entire ministry of three plus years – *“they still would not believe in Him.”*
- B. “Believe” is used eight times in this section. John says they **would not** (12:37, **could not** (12:39), and **chose not** (12:42; 5:44) to believe! *“He came to His own, and His own people did not accept Him.”* (John 1:11)
- C. This is Jesus’ final public message to His own people – compare with John 3:16-21:
 - 1. Believing Him was to believe God His Father – 12:44-45
 - 2. He is the light which can bring them out of darkness – 12:46; Isaiah 9:2; 60:1.
 - 3. As prophesied about Christ through Moses (Deuteronomy 18:18-19), God will judge them by the very words Jesus had spoken to them – 12:47-50.

Their King had come... but they had rejected Him!